

Public Notice – Environmental Project

PURPOSE OF NOTICE:

The Department of Environmental Quality seeks public comment on the state's response to the environmental aspects of a proposed federal action in the Chesapeake Bay north of the City of Virginia Beach.

PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

January 27, 2017 to February 22, 2017

TYPE OF RESPONSE:

Federal Consistency Certification

DEQ is reviewing a proposed federal agency action to determine whether it is consistent with the Virginia Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Program established pursuant to the federal Coastal Zone Management Act. The Virginia CZM Program seeks to protect the quality of air, water or other natural resources in Virginia's coastal zone.

NAME OF AGENCY PROPOSING THE PROJECT:

DOD/U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The Norfolk District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) is reviewing a Joint Permit Application submitted by the Chesapeake Tunnel Joint Venture (applicant) for the issuance of an individual permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (Public Law 95-217) for impacts to jurisdictional waters of the United States from the proposed Parallel Thimble Shoal Tunnel (PTST) Project in the Chesapeake Bay north of the City of Virginia Beach. The PTST Project consists of the construction of a two-lane parallel tunnel to the west of the existing Thimble Shoal Tunnel, connecting Portal Island Nos. 1 and 2. Upon completion, the new tunnel will carry two lanes of southbound traffic and the existing tunnel will remain in operation and carry two lanes of northbound traffic. The new parallel tunnel will be bored under the Thimble Shoal Channel. The 6,525 linear feet of new tunnel will be constructed with a top of tunnel depth/elevation of 100 feet below mean low water (MLW) within the width of the 1,000-foot-wide navigation channel. Construction of the tunnel structure will begin on Portal Island No. 1 and move from south to north to Portal Island No. 2. The tunnel boring machine (TBM) components will be barged and trucked to Portal Island No. 1. Approximately 510,000 cubic yards (cy) of material will be excavated and transported by the TBM. This material will be disposed at an approved off-site facility in accordance with the Dredged Material Management Plan (DMMP). While excavated tunnel material is transported back to Portal Island No. 1, precast concrete tunnel segments will be transported to the TBM and the tunnel segments will be assembled in place as the tunnel is bored. Upland work for the PTST Project will include removal of the above-water access-way at the Portal Island No. 2 engineered berm, and installation of the final roadway, lighting, finishes, mechanical systems, and other required internal systems for tunnel use and function. In addition, the existing fishing pier will be repaired and refurbished. The applicant has submitted a Federal Consistency Certification that finds the proposed project consistent with the enforceable policies of the Virginia Coastal Zone Management Program.

HOW TO COMMENT:

DEQ accepts comments from the public by e-mail, fax or postal mail. All comments must include the name, address and telephone number of the person commenting and be received by DEQ within the comment period. The public may review the project documents at DEQ's central office in Richmond.

CONTACT FOR PUBLIC COMMENTS, DOCUMENT REQUESTS AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

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